

REMARKS

INTRODUCTION:

Claims 1-24 are pending and under consideration. Claims 7-10 are objected to.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102:

Claims 1-6 and 11-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Sakai et al.

Using independent claim 1 as an example, this claim recites a residual developer withdrawing member disposed in a spaced-apart relation with the developer supplying member. Present FIG. 2 illustrates these features.

In contrast, as shown in FIG. 12B of Sakai et al., the cleaning roller 45 and supplying roller 42 of this reference are in contact with each other. Furthermore, column 23, lines 27-28 of the reference specifically state that “cleaning roller 45, being in contact with supplying roller 42 . . .” The reference further specifies that this is a “pressing contact.” Sakai et al., column 23, line 33. The supplying roller 42 is made of a porous material. Sakai et al., col. 13, ln. 62-65. The cleaning roller 45 may be a hard roller (metal or hard resin) or may be porous like the supplying roller 42. Sakai et al., column 23, lines 37-38.

The Examiner argues that “both rollers are spaced apart due to the developer formed in between the rollers.” Applicant respectfully disagrees that the developer ‘spaces apart’ the rollers 45 and 42.

First, there is no disclosure in the reference that the developer spaces apart the rollers. Instead, this conclusion by the Examiner goes directly against the explicit statement within the reference that the rollers 45 and 42 are in pressing contact with each other. Second, the Examiner appears to assume an incompressible developer which would space apart the rollers 45 and 42 despite the pressure that these two contacting rollers would exert on the developer. However, there is no disclosure in the reference that the toner has such a property.

Finally, the Examiner neglects the composition of the rollers. A metal cleaning roller 45 would be hard enough so that the toner could not space this roller 45 from the supplying roller 42. In the case of a porous roller, the toner would be received in the pores, thereby enabling the rollers to maintain contact while still transporting the toner.

It is further noted that dependent claim 14 recites that the withdrawing member is spaced apart from the supplier by a predetermined gap. As discussed above, the rollers 45 and 42 of

the reference are not spaced apart by any gap, but are instead in contact with each other.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

OBJECTED TO CLAIMS:

Based on the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that objected to claims 7-10 are patentable over the cited reference in their present form.

CONCLUSION:

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

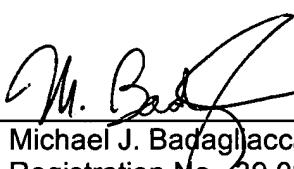
Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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